

Satan's Devices

Glen Springfield
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The title of my sermon today is:

Satan's Devices

I have to tell you, putting this sermon together has been one of the hardest things I've ever done as far as speaking because one distraction came up after another. One false start—no that's not right—false start again, and again. Pages written, torn up, thrown away; it was just a real struggle. Business distractions, concerns and stresses. You get the idea that Satan doesn't want this sermon given. We'll talk about that in a little while but even on the drive over here to James', we got more than half way—it's about a 45-minute drive—we were like 30 minutes down the road and we discovered that Samuel didn't have his meds. So we had to turn around and go all the way back and get his meds because they have to be very precisely timed. They are very, very important to his wellbeing. So we had to go all the way back and then come back and get set up and get ready to give the sermon.

One of the points I want to make an impact with is the fact that Satan is real. He is a real being and even though he is surrounded by myths and misinformation, Satan is our enemy. Satan doesn't want us to think about him, he doesn't want us to talk about him, he wants to be completely invisible. He doesn't want to be identified. He works in stealth mode. Ignorance is his chief weapon. Ignorance of his motives, his movements, his intents, his army, his position, his power, his influence, tools, tricks; deception is his chief weapon. Ignorance that he exists and that he is active and how active he actually is in this world and in our lives. Satan is subtle. He plays different parts to different people. He is the snake in the Garden of Eden, but in the wilderness tempting Christ, he was the powerful god of this world with all of the authority.

Most people in the world don't believe Satan is real. They don't believe he even exists. They have completely distorted views and few people would admit that Satan has influence on them. If you just go ask people, "Do you believe Satan is real?" around the world most people would say no. Of those who say "Yes, I believe he is real." If you ask if they think Satan is influencing them, then it would be complete denial. We're unaware of what he does and how he does it.

I have a lot of scriptures and I want to apologize in advance to those who want to look up every single scripture. I have a lot of one liners that are all familiar. When you hear the words, you're going to say, "Yeah I know that." You're welcome to write them down but for time's sake I'm not going to be able to allow time to turn to every scripture. Although some I will; some we are going to slow down and read it and talk about it.

In 2 Corinthians 2, Paul says *for we are not ignorant of his devices*. But we are; most people are completely unaware of his devices. People in the world for sure, but also people in the COG's. Just think about how many people you know who were baptized into the church and then after years, they gave it up. They left the truth. We see that happen over and over. It's happened in my family. To siblings—it's obvious that Satan has an influence and people are not aware of that influence and how diligent they need to be to not be taken down by Satan.

Revelation 12:9, John wrote, *so that great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old called the devil and Satan who deceives the whole world*. We need to take a moment and just grasp that. This whole world is deceived. 2 Timothy 3, Paul wrote to Timothy, *but evil men and impostures will grow worse and worse deceiving and being deceived*. So, we see—and I've experienced and you've experienced—that people, friends, and acquaintances can be tools of Satan to be used to persuade us to different ideas, different thoughts, different beliefs. This system, this world system, you see it everywhere; you see humans taking advantage of humans, deceiving each other to gain advantage for power, position—for profit. Deceiving and being deceived. 2 Corinthians 4:3.

2 Corinthians 4:3 *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,*
4) *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. (NKJV)*

Satan has been affective. He has blinded the whole world. He has created a cafeteria of religious ideas, concepts and doctrines, all conflicting opinions, designed to hide the gospel of the Kingdom of God that Christ brought. The simplicity of the gospel. Mankind is oblivious to God's purpose, unaware of His intent and motives, so full of false beliefs. Humanity has been kidnapped by Satan. You probably recognize that from 20-30 years ago when that was talked about a lot. Satan has kidnapped the whole world. John 10:1.

John 10:1 *Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*
2) *But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.*
3) *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*
4) *And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*
5) *Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”*
6) *Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.*
7) *Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. (NKJV)*

We're going to circle back and finish that thought but when we look at the evil that men do for power, for profit, for self-indulgence—things like kidnapping children and selling children as young as five years old for sex slaves for pedophiles. I saw the movie The Sound of Freedom and it's a real deal—a \$1.5 billion growing industry. The point I want to make is that it's easy to say that is Satanic. That's easy to label. But is that where he is working? He already has those people. They've already made their choice; they are doing things they know are wrong. Let's look at the most subtle things. Let's look at the messages preached in churches around the world every Sunday.

You already have an immortal soul—you're immortal.
You can decide for yourself what's right and wrong.
Just be a good person and you'll go to heaven.
You don't need that law telling you what to do, the law is done away.
All you have to do is just believe.
You don't need to repent and change.
God loves you just the way you are.

Satan has done a great job of deceiving the whole world. Satan does not want to be exposed. He uses every possible trick to blind men's eyes to the true gospel of the Kingdom that Christ brought to save mankind. He does it by being invisible to mankind. Satan is not working alone; he's not the lone wolf. In Revelation 12:7:

Revelation 12:7 *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8) but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. (NKJV)*

Satan has an army of loyal followers.

9) So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (NKJV)

If you just look at the names that refers to Satan. We just read four of them. He's *the great dragon, the serpent of old*, he's *the devil*, and *Satan*. In Revelation 12:10, he is *the accuser of the brethren*. In Revelation 9, he is *Apollyon* which means "destroyer". He is *Belial* which means "worthless or lawless" in 2 Corinthians 6. In the model prayer it says to deliver us from *the evil one*. *Beelzebub* in Mark 3:22, that means "lord of the house". There's many more. I read—I didn't count myself—that there are more than 40 names for Satan in scripture.

What is our image of Satan? What do we think? As the originator of sin and evil, it's common to associate him with grotesque images. Terrifying, creepy, horrible, monster-movie kind of things. Or a comical figure with horns, short tail, cloven feet. Literature, movies, all of this has really shaped an image of Satan that is completely inconsistent with scriptures. Let's look at John 8:44. Christ is talking to the Jews who opposed Him.

John 8:44 *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.* (NKJV)

He is an individual, a personality—Christ speaks of him as the father of deception. We know that Satan was not created a horrible, terrifying looking monster. 2 Corinthians 11 says, *no wonder for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.* So Satan is attractive, he's cunning, persuasive. He's not scary looking—he is scary. Genesis 3:1.

Genesis 3:1 *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"* (NKJV)

He was sneaky, he is subtle. In 1 Peter 5:8.

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* (NKJV)

Lions are majestic creatures. They are king of the jungle so to speak. But you don't want to pet the kitty. Let's go to Ezekiel 28 and we're going to spend a little time here because this is where God gives us a lot of important information. Ezekiel 28:11, verses 1-10 are dealing with the king of Tyre, which is obviously not what he's dealing with in verses 11-19.

Ezekiel 28:11 *Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 12) "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.* (NKJV)

Why a lamentation? With all the evil that Satan has done and is doing and his intent, why would there be any lamentation about him? It's because that is not the way he was created. He was the *seal of perfection*. He was *full of wisdom* and he was *perfect in beauty*. We don't know what *perfect in beauty* means because I don't think we've ever seen perfection in beauty. He was one of the greatest creations of Yehovah. Perfect, wise, he was something that Yehovah was very pleased with. His appearance must be amazing—we can't even imagine that. His demons want to be like him and they want to be liked by him. Groupies that just want to be in his presence, to please him, to make him happy, to find favor in his eyes. They will do anything to further his agenda in order to please him. For the moment, he is their god.

13) *You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.* (NKJV)

Where else to do we see these precious stones? In the breastplate that the High Priest wore, the first three rows consisted of these stones. You see most of these stones mentioned in Revelation 21 as the foundation for the New Jerusalem. Satan didn't play a musical instrument; he was a musical instrument. *The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes.* He sounds good. He looks good. He's persuasive.

14) *"You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. (NKJV)*

Cherub is the singular of cherubim and we know that Yehovah dwells between two. They were guarding His throne. I can think of reading the book of Nehemiah and about him—he was the king's cup bearer. What did the cup bearer do? Turns out he was one of the highest people in the kingdom because he was always with the king and he was listening to all the conversations. He was like an adviser to the king. These two mighty cherubs that dwell on either side of Yehovah, they are in, like the highest, highest position. They have the most privileged access to the throne of God. They see everything, they know everything. In Genesis 3, remember when Adam was sent out of the Garden of Eden that He put two cherubim to guard the way to the Tree of Life. That's part of what Satan's job was.

15) *You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. (NKJV)*

What did he do? That's an interesting question. We're going to see; we're going to go through a lot of scriptures that show exactly what this is talking about.

16) *"By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, [He kicked him out] From the midst of the fiery stones.*

17) *Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. (NKJV)*

Imagine the pinnacle of God's creatures, at the highest, highest top, perfect in wisdom, beautiful beyond description, in the way he sounds, in the workmanship of his pipes and timbrels. He is appealing in every way; he looks good, he sounds good, he's smart, cunning, and wise. What did he do? What was his sin when iniquity was found in him?

God created angels with freewill. They are not programmed to follow God like a robot. They have freedom of choice, just like we do. To get an idea of Satan's guilt, let's look at Isaiah 14. We'll spend a minute there. Ezekiel and Isaiah are where we learn the most about Satan.

Isaiah 14:12 *How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!* (NKJV)

He is an angel of light, that's what Lucifer means. When the sons of God were shouting for joy at creation, Satan was right there with them, shouting for joy. Something changed. We see that he *weakens the nations*.

13) For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; (NKJV)

He wants to be at the top, the pinnacle, receiving the adoration of everyone else. The top of the top, king of kings.

14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. (NKJV)

If you notice the five things where Satan says, "I will". I will ascend into heaven, exalt my throne above all the other angels, above the stars of God, I'm going to take over—I'm perfect in wisdom, in beauty and have a pretty big following, pretty popular. I've done a little recon work; I know how everybody else is feeling and thinking. Think I can pull this off, I think I'm just going to take over. I will sit on the mount of the congregation. I will ascend above the heights of the cloud—above everything that is. I will be like the Most High.

So what was Satan's sin? What was the abundance of his trading? If you go to a market and see a lot of trading going on, you see a lot of banter. You see selling of this, selling of that, you see people talking other people into this—being persuasive. How did he start his campaign? Stirring up contempt with the angels. How do you feel about your position around here? Are you happy with your job? Wouldn't you like a higher position? Have you ever felt like you're being a little excluded? You feel like something is missing? Something is being withheld? This is the same tactic that was used in the Garden of Eden. Look how the COG's have been divided over position and power.

Satan caused angels and causes humans today to feel neglected, underappreciated, misunderstood, unfairly judged. He sows the seed of discord and then feeds and expands that discontent to create allies for what he wants to do. With his beauty, majesty, charm, intelligence, beautiful sound he talked the demons into giving up real joy, real utopia, real happiness and talked them into rebellion and self destruction. That is pretty persuasive. He's saying,

"Wouldn't you guys like a little more power, more position? I'm thinking of setting up a kingdom of my own and you would be a good Prime Minister. God hasn't given you the chance that He should. You were created for something better than this. It doesn't make any sense what's going on, that God won't give you a chance. But I'll give it to you. I'm making plans to lead a rebellion in order to right

all these wrongs so we can all be treated fairly and we get what we deserve. Interested?"

With that tactic and enough time, Satan took 1/3 of the angels with him. We may think that Satan is at work when people fall into gross sin; pornography, prostitution, pedophiles, drug dealers, kidnappers, slavery, murders, criminals of all kinds. There is no doubt that he is behind that, but we need to realize that those things are really diversions. Those are big diversions to distract people. That's his covert activities so that people are looking at that and pointing at that and saying,

"Look how bad that is, how evil that is, how much pain that causes. I could never do that."

By looking and pointing, they are not evaluating their own thoughts and their own sins. Looking at the terrible things that criminals do—the pain they cause—keeps us from looking at our own sins and evaluating our own selves. The damage that we have done to other people. Satan is subtle. He has deceived the whole world and most people in the world have no idea he even exists or what he is doing. Satan gets an A+ in deceiving the whole world. He has done the five "I will's".

I will ascend into heaven.
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.
I will sit on the mount of the congregation.
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.
I will be like the Most High.

Satan didn't want to be the devil. He didn't want to be the adversary, the destroyer. He doesn't want to be the ruler of the lost souls in hell, as many in the world believe. He wants to be God with all the majesty, glory, adoration, position and power of Yehovah. Going back to the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:4 *Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5) For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6) So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. [She fell for it] She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. (NKJV)*

But he wasn't deceived, but he fell for it. Satan uses other people to tempt us. It's one of his tools. Humans for the most part, don't believe today that they need God in order to know right from wrong. They believe they have that knowledge within themselves. You go to the parking lot of any church and ask,

"Do you know right from wrong?" "Yes, I know right from wrong, I've got it down."

What is sin? I know you have a memory scripture for that but I'm not going there.

We've seen the entrance of sin through Satan. He was setting his will against God. Everything that is contrary to the will and character of Yehovah is sin. Murder is not sin just because it's in the Ten Commandments, murder is sin because it's contrary to the will and character of God. God is love; always has been, always will be. We can be grateful for that.

At one time Satan decided he wasn't interested in his job of being a covering cherub. He says I know I am the highest creature of all but after all, I think I'm pretty enough, I'm wise enough, I'm smart enough and good enough to be God. I am worthy of worship; I should be the one who is being worshipped. Go to Matthew 4:8, here in the temptation of Christ.

Matthew 4:8 *Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.*

9) And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." (NKJV)

That's what Satan wants. He wants to be worshipped, that's his goal. People today—humans—want position, power, prestige, and status, and they are willing to hurt others to get what they want. They think they deserve to be at the top at the expense of everyone else. That is the spirit of Satan, that's what he wants. Anything contrary to Yehovah's will is sin. In the model prayer, Christ said, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven". Anything contrary to that, that's sin. From the time we are little children we want to have our own way. Having our way is more important than anything else. When we don't get our way, we get angry. We cry, we have a temper tantrum. When we get a little older, we may get creative and figure out a way to get our way. Getting our way is important because we deserve it. People who stand in the way of us getting our way, they are just bad people. Those are obstacles to be overcome.

Mankind has set his will so that what he thinks is important, what he thinks is in his best interest is what is most important—against the will of Yehovah; putting man's will above God's will, just like Satan. Let's not be ignorant of Satan's devices. Satan feeds the thoughts to justify that thinking. Puts it into our minds. Proverbs 14:12, "*there is a way that seems right to a man but its end is the way of death*". We know that scripture.

We know—and are grateful for it—the will of God is coming to this world with unstoppable force. Anything, any person, who gets in the way will be eliminated. Yehovah will prevail. Everything contrary to Yehovah's will is sin and it is marked for destruction. The sin of Satan is that he set his will above the will of Yehovah and then through the abundance of his trading, he sold one third of the angels on joining him and buying into his way of thinking. Isaiah 53:6.

Isaiah 53:6 *All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (NKJV)*

Right now, the cosmos, the earth, this whole system, is where Satan has control today. When he rebelled against Yehovah, he no longer occupied his position as a *cherub that covered*. We see that he still had access to God's throne. We see in Job, Satan going into the presence of God with the loyal angels and no one stopped him. No one says, "What are you doing here?" We see that Yehovah may give permission to Satan to test us. In Luke 22:31.

Luke 22:31 *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.*

32) But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." (NKJV)

Christ knew that he was going to be tested and tempted and Christ knew he was going to fail. He knew that he would come back. In Job 1:9.

Job 1:9 *So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?*

10) Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

11) But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

12) And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. (NKJV)

That was the iniquity of his trading. There he was at God's throne, negotiating with God, selling his point of view. We see Satan getting permission to test Job. But we also see that it had limits. When we look at what Satan did to Job, it was bad news. On top of that, he sent three friends to accuse Job, to tell him it was his own fault. That you actually deserve all this. Illness, sleep deprivation and what for?

For the moment, Satan has achieved his object to be God, but only on earth. Luke 4, we're going to look at the other chapter with the temptation of Christ.

Luke 4:5 *Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.*

6) And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

7) Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." (NKJV)

That's the iniquity of his trading; he's still bargaining and will never stop trying to persuade people to his way of thinking. Satan wants you and me to fail in following Christ. That's his chief objective right now. John 12:31.

John 12:31 *Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. (NKJV)*

That scripture's not hidden from Satan, he knows. John 14:30.

John 14:30 *I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. (NKJV)*

Revelation 2:13 *I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. (NKJV)*

Satan is the god of this world. He's been given all the authority, he's been given all the power, everything is his, it's his system. His throne is right here. 1 John 4:4. We have a big enemy out there. He's big, he's subtle; we cannot be ignorant of his devices, we cannot underestimate the enemy.

1 John 4:4 *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

5) They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. (NKJV)

Flip to chapter 5:19.

1 John 5:19 *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. (NKJV)*

We know that—Satan is the god of this world. These are all his systems. The whole world is asleep and unaware of what they are doing and why they are doing it and what influences them and where it's all headed. There can be no peace because Satan is at work, invisible with an army to bring about the destruction of mankind; particularly you and I. James 4:4.

James 4:4 *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (NKJV)*

This is Satan's world. How do we feel about the finer things of this world? Art, museums, seats of education, culture, refinement? All of this is part of the cosmos—it's all part of Satan's system. The world's system under Satan. Many people, most people look at religion as a list of "do's and don'ts" which, if adhered to, makes them righteous and qualifies them for whatever their image of the afterlife is. That's really a trap. That was a trap the Pharisees fell into—rule keeping. 1 Corinthians 7:29; there are so many warnings to us in here. I think we have the impression that we know about Satan and know what he is doing and then we skip the importance of these warnings.

1 Corinthians 7:29 *But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, 30) those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, 31) and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.* (NKJV)

Today, people are so wrapped up in this world and its systems—in business, in careers, education, social life, social media, TV, movies, entertainment. How attached are we to those things? If somebody was going to say, no more TV for a year or five years, how do you feel about that? In truth, it's all going away. Or worse, your cell phone. It's all going away. Paul says that things are passing away and when God judges Satan and judges the demons, He's judging that whole system. If we think that those things that are Satan's systems, have no influence on us, we're fooling ourselves. If we're looking at criminals and saying,

"I'm doing pretty good, I keep the Sabbath, I keep the Holy Days, I'm rocking!"

That's a trap. Let's go to Ephesians 6; you probably know we were heading here eventually.

Ephesians 6:11 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* (NKJV)

Don't underestimate the enemy. He's bigger, he's stronger, he's smarter, he's invisible, he can put thoughts in your mind. James 4:7.

James 4:7 *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.* (NKJV)

Slow down and look at that. If we are not completely, 100% submitted to God, we cannot resist the devil. We can't even identify his devices. We have to submit to God first. 1 Peter 5:8.

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* (NKJV)

We are told to be watchful because the enemy is stalking you. Right now, the enemy is stalking you. Looking for the opportunity. Can we overcome Satan? Can we beat Satan in a fight? No, we can't. Christ overcame Satan. We're told to stand and resist. Go to Ephesians 6:13.

Ephesians 6:13 *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (NKJV)*

So, we have to withstand and stand.

14) Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth ... (NKJV)

In the ancient battle garb of the day, the girdle was very, very important because it held the rest of the uniform in place. If the girdle came loose or something, then your pants fell down and things are flapping all over the place and it can be serious. In movies—comedy routines—that's pretty funny. Somebody trying to run with his pants falling down, but in a battle, it's not funny. What is truth? Truth is the Word of God. Truth is the Word of God as it is written; not taking away, not adding to—as it is written. Truth is what holds everything together.

14 continued) having put on the breastplate of righteousness ... (NKJV)

We put on the righteousness of Christ, not our righteousness. Go to Romans 13:11, an important concept.

Romans 13:11 *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.*

12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

13) Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

14) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. (NKJV)

We have to put on Christ. Let's go back to Ephesians 6 now.

Ephesians 6:15 *and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; (NKJV)*

Shoes are pretty important on a battle field. They help us keep our footing. We need a good solid foundation. To be stable we need to be anchored on the Rock. Christ is our foundation. We have to put on Christ—our survival depends on it—we have to be anchored in Him.

16) above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

18) praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— (NKJV)

The armor in Ephesians 6 is a spiritual armor because we have a spiritual enemy. We are to stand in that armor and that armor is Christ. You remember, I read Job—you don't have to flip back there again because I've read this a couple of times—it says,

“Have you not made a hedge around Him, around His household, around all That He has on every side. Have you blessed the work of His hands and His possessions have increased in the land?”

Job was not aware that there was a hedge around him. We aren't aware that there is a hedge around us. God has given us this armor so we have a means of defense. The shield of faith was a shield that covered the whole body of the soldier. The large shield in the Grecian heavy infantry was the size of a door. A soldier stood behind it, completely protected. Christ is our provision, He is our protection. Christ is both the door to salvation and the shield that protects us. That's really what John 10 is talking about. Remember when we read earlier about the Good Shepherd where Christ said, *“I am the door, if anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture”*. Faith is what enables us to stand behind the shield which will quench all the fiery darts that Satan is throwing at us. They keep coming—trial after trial—that one is finished, here's comes another. How do we hang in there? It's that shield of faith.

In the Greek army the infantry was called the Hoplites. They would put their shields in front of them and stand shoulder to shoulder and that wall of shields would completely protect them. The enemy would shoot all the ammunition they had and the Hoplites would stand behind the shield until the enemy ran out of ammunition. Then they would move in for a sure victory.

Talking about the helmet of salvation. The helmet protects the head. God appeals to the mind of men. Throughout scripture God urges man to think. In Isaiah 1 he says, *“Come now and let us reason together”*. Think about it. 1 Thessalonians 5:8.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 *But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.* (NKJV)

These are the same weapons. Satan shows no mercy. If he catches us without our armor, gets us in a corner, he's not going to let up; he's not going to be merciful. He wants you to self-destruct. He wants me to self-destruct. We cannot underestimate Satan and survive. Satan will be judged someday. God is first going to incarcerate him during the millennium and then he's going to destroy him in the end. Satan knows he's going down. He just wants to take as many of God's children with him as he possibly can. He hates what God is doing. He hates God for doing it. He resents God building a family of individuals in God's image. Today though, Satan is the one running the world. He runs all the different governments of the world. all the systems—education centers, culture, entertainment, philosophies. He is a master of disguise and persuasion. He is the one who is behind all sexual perversion. He hates functional families that operate as God designed them to operate. He hates that so he destroys it through perversion. He is the one behind wars between nations and he's the one causing feuds between

families. He cultivates anger, resentment, self-pity, lust, greed, covetousness, jealousy, vanity, pride, dissatisfaction, hate, selfishness—he cultivates it; fertilizes it like a garden. He uses other people to get close to us. Then once they are close to us, to test us; to suggest opposing ways of thinking. He constructs circumstances in our lives to discourage us so we'll give up. That's what he wants, for us to give up. He's smart, he's attractive, he's persuasive, he is a master of trade. He is invisible and he's after us.

Look at what he did to Job. What did his own wife tell him? "*Curse God and die.*" That's what Satan wants. That's what Satan wants for you and me, to give up. Just curse God and die.

These weapons we've talked about so far have been defensive weapons. But we have a couple of offensive weapons. The first is the Word of God. Christ used the Word in His time of trial in the wilderness. Revelation 1:16.

Revelation 1:16 *He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.* (NKJV)

Flip over to Revelation 19:20, where we see the sword.

Revelation 19:20 *Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*
21) *And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.* (NKJV)

The Word of God is an offensive weapon. Our second weapon, mentioned in Ephesians 6, is prayer. What is prayer? Prayer is talking to God. Telling God that you recognize the enemy and you recognize that you are powerless against the enemy without His help. Then discussing what's going on. Being specific, asking for help while submitting to His will. Prayer is your offensive weapon. The word supplication used in Ephesians 6—prayer and supplication. *Supplication* comes from a Latin word meaning "to plead humbly". It is specific to pleading humbly. We're not asked to fight and defeat Satan. God has that covered and in the right time, Satan will be completely defeated. We're here for a reason. John 17:15, Christ's prayer to His Father.

John 17:15 *I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.* (NKJV)

He didn't pray that we would be taken out of the world. We are here for a reason. We are here to stand and resist and given the defensive weaponry and the offensive weaponry to do that if we will just take it seriously. Satan doesn't want us to take it seriously. He doesn't want us to think about him. He wants to be invisible and operate behind the scenes. He wants you to think that things that happen are just

coincidences—just bad luck. “I don’t know why that happened to me. Why does this always happen to me?” He wants us to be discouraged and to destroy us. We have to realize who the god of this world is. They are not all coincidences. There is an active force trying to make your life miserable. Trying to make you give up. Trying to make you discouraged and putting thoughts into your mind. They don’t have to stay there—we can resist it. That’s what Christ tells us to do. He gives us all this weaponry so that we can stand and resist Satan. So that we can resist the devil.

Satan is out there and is real. I look at all the obstacles that came up for me just trying to put this sermon together. Just trying to identify all the scriptures and put together a story flow and the weirdest things would happen to distract me. It made it harder and harder. It was one of the hardest things I’ve ever put together and it’s a really simple subject. All the scriptures are easy to identify and yet one distraction after another. Sam was supposed to get to Dallas about 5 or 6pm, instead he didn’t get here until after midnight. We then got very few hours of sleep because he has to take his meds at 6am—so a little sleep deprivation. Then we get up and get things going and we head halfway here and had forgotten the meds. Got to go back and do it all again. I don’t think all that is an accident. I think there’s a lot of things in our lives that are not an accident. We’re just blowing them off as if they were.

We’re not to be ignorant of his devices. These are all his devices. We know his purpose; we know what he’s doing and how he’s doing it. Those are his devices. We have to be alert; we have to put on our armor and we have to keep our armor on. We have to stay in a defensive position. We have to be close to Yehovah, we have to be close to Christ our Passover. We have to resist, to stand fast in the truth, to stand with all that weaponry. If we’re not familiar with God’s Word, if we don’t know it really, really well, that’s just an entrance for Satan to get to us and put in a false concept. To identify a counterfeit bill, a federal agent doesn’t look and see what all the counterfeit bills look like, they study the real thing. The real thing here is the Word of God. They study the real thing. What does the real thing look like? What does God really think like so that we can identify things that aren’t matching up to the real thing?

There was a guy who got curious about this allegation that that’s the way they teach federal agents to identify counterfeit bills. So, he went to the Treasury Department, set an appointment and asked, “Is this really true? How does it work? How do you identify counterfeit bills?” He found out that that’s true. There is a four-step process.

The first step is touch because a counterfeit bill will feel different—a fake will feel smooth. So, you touch it.

Then you tilt it because when you tilt it and look at it against a light a mark like a “thread” appears that didn’t appear before.

Next when you know the feel of it, you have touched it, and you know what it feels like. Then you tilt it and look from all the different angles and see what colors appear – holographic images and stuff.

Then you're supposed to look at it to see any tiny writing it should have. What does it say? What is the plainness of what is written on it?

God's Word is the same way.

If we're familiar with God's Word, we know what it feels like.

If we have taken God's Word and we have looked at from all the different angles,

If we have looked through it to see the depth of its meaning.

If we look just at it and see the surface meaning, if we are completely familiar with God's Word and what He thinks and how He operates and what He's doing.

Then when counterfeits pop up, we can identify them. We can keep on our armor. We cannot be ignorant of Satan's devices.